ABORIGINAL BUSINESS: CELEBRATED IN ALBERTA

MARCH 2012

Economic development is an important part of the Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada (AANDC) mandate. AANDC works to increase First Nation, Inuit and Métis participation in the workforce across Canada. This benefits Aboriginal individuals, families, communities, employers and the Canadian economy as a whole.

AANDC's economic development programs provide funding to community organizations (or organizations they designate). These organizations use the funding for their economic development projects and the delivery of services to community members. The Department also encourages both the private and public sectors to add First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples to their current workforce, and promotes the use of Aboriginal businesses for federal government supplies and services.

In a speech delivered to attendees at the Aboriginal Entrepreneur's Conference and Trade Show in October 2011, AANDC Minister John Duncan said: "The opportunities for economic development and business growth have never been greater. And Aboriginal participation in both the labour market, as well as economic development initiatives across the country is an important part of a strong and dynamic Canadian economy."

The companies highlighted here are proof positive of the Minister's comments. They are worthy finalists for the awards AANDC sponsors. Enjoy their success stories.

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Eagle Feather Award finalist

ALBERTA INDIAN INVESTMENT CORPORATION In business to support the Alberta First Nations entrepreneurial spirit

The Alberta Indian Investment Corporation (AIIC), established in 1987, is collectively owned by Alberta's First Nations. AIIC has spent over 25 years actively supporting and promoting First Nations businesses and entrepreneurial activities.

For the staff, travel throughout Alberta from their Enoch First Nation office is done on a regular basis, because of their commitment to help First Nation businesses excel. They engage both on and off-reserve ventures by providing loans, equity financing, business education and support mechanisms. Meeting clients where they work is one of many functions that further support the corporation's mandate of promoting self-sufficiency through viable community opportunities and initiatives.

The criterion for working with the corporation is fairly straightforward. "We want owners and entrepreneurs with vision, a propensity to work hard and a commitment and belief in themselves," said Chief Executive Officer Rocky Sinclair. "Our role is much broader than just providing loans and business assistance. It's about building trust and lasting relationships that will make us all successful."

AIIC prides itself on being able to give back to the community by supporting a number of events and post-secondary excellence through two annual scholarships.

Exterior of Wingate Hotel

Aware of the importance of education at all levels, they offer a series of summer camps for youth interested in business in order to help them acquire the necessary tools to consider self-employment as a future option. Additionally, AIIC co-sponsors and delivers entrepreneurial training and leadership development programs to Aboriginal high school students throughout Alberta.

The corporation has also partnered with Acadia University to deliver small business training seminars that build technical capacity in First Nation communities. It was also honoured to be selected as

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MARCH 2012

THE ALBERTA BUSINESS AWARDS OF DISTINCTION

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THE ALBERTA BUSINESS AWARDS OF DISTINCTION

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THE ALBERTA BUSINESS AWARDS OF DISTINCTION
Eagle Feather Award finalist

ASENIWUCHE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

Respecting the land through sustainable development partnerships

The Aseniwuche Development Corporation (ADC) has been nominated three years in a row for this award.

The ADC is part of the Aseniwuche Winewak Nation (AWN), formed in 1994 to unify six Aboriginal settlements surrounding Grande Cache, Alberta. The community primarily self identify as non-status Indians, but some are registered Indians and some self identify as Métis. Most of AWN's relationships are with the Government of Alberta.

The ADC is now entering its 14th year and the outlook is promising and prosperous. ADC continues to provide employment opportunities, support and services for all members while maintaining a balance between the resource development aspects and respecting traditional cultural values. Respect and care for the land, commonly referred to as Mother Earth by the Aboriginal people, is always an essential component of all project planning and implementation of the projects they are involved with.

Through rigorous training standards and a reputation for exemplary work, ADC has built the largest local labour force in the area. It has carefully nurtured excellent working relationships with numerous resource-based companies operating in their traditional lands and beyond. Partnerships are based on trust, ensuring that all parties involved share mutually beneficial outcomes. This includes long-term economic benefits, while respecting the environment and the peoples of the AWN.

ADC crew slashing near Jasper

Its commitment to a well trained, highly professional labour force has resulted in continuous diversification and ADC operating five divisions: Automotive Services; Forestry; Mining; Oil and Gas; and Welding. A sister corporation, Aseniwuche Environmental Corporation, is focused on project development and assessment, planning, monitoring, impact mitigation, safety and a host of other environmental considerations that ensure sustainable development.

ADC strategically planned this move towards better integration and involvement in resource planning from the onset. It complements the labour component of the services they offer – falling, clearing, surface water management, construction, metal fabrication and many others – while ensuring other AWN members, particularly elders, are involved in project development and planning from the very beginning.

The depth and professionalism of AWN's consultation process – ADC is a primary partner - is a model for effective, inclusive, cooperative project management. A key component is the cultural camp they have operated for over 10 years. Every year, industry personnel spend two and a half days with their hosts immersed in the traditional lifestyle of the Aseniwuche Winewak.

ADC mulcher at work

They share in sweat lodges, wild plant identification, hide tanning, language and history lessons, feasts, drumming and extensive time with community elders. The end result is camaraderie, increased awareness and understanding of sometimes contrasting viewpoints, to say nothing of investment opportunities and economic partnerships.

"The cultural camps are vital to knowledge and awareness sharing," said ADC President and CEO David McPhee. "They bring our people and our partners together so we can progressively and respectfully develop planning processes that meet everyone's needs and expectations. They are a valuable tool in our ongoing growth by fostering projects that respect the land, our people and sustainable resource development."

ADC plans to continue to grow in harmony with its partners. It will do so while supporting – financially and through active participation - a wide range of community, social and cultural activities that nurture and improve not only AWN members but the region as a whole.

ASENIWUCHE DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION

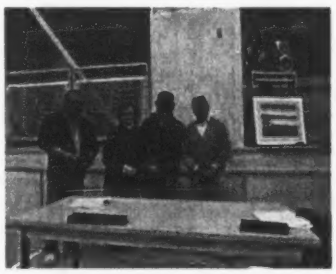
THE ALBERTA BUSINESS AWARDS OF DISTINCTION
Best Practice Award finalist

HUSKY ENERGY

Building sustainable relationships with a 'three-pillar' approach

Husky Energy has a long history in Alberta, dating back to 1946 when it commenced operations at the Lloydminster Refining Company. Today, it has a major presence in the provincial, national and global integrated energy sector.

Employing more than 3,100 Albertans, Husky's approach to workplace diversity and effective Aboriginal Relations is an industry model. From its headquarters to its most remote operating facility, Husky has created a culture of inclusiveness, respect and active involvement within the community.



Partnership agreement signatories

Recognizing its importance, Husky has developed an established Aboriginal Relations component within its corporate structure. The nine-person team takes a lead role in Aboriginal Relations, but every Husky employee is expected to pursue and practise effective and respectful relations in their everyday work. The Aboriginal Relations team also interacts with all other departments on a regular basis to improve working relationships.

"Husky is a strong supporter of Aboriginal communities," said Dave Lawrence, Manager of Aboriginal and Community Relations." We have three pillars of Aboriginal community investment: Education; Economic Development; and Wellness. By 'walking the talk' and investing in these communities, both the company and the community ultimately benefit on many levels."

Husky is very proud of its new Aboriginal Mentorship Program. Launched in 2011, the program targets post-secondary students entering or currently enrolled in areas of high-growth job demand. Husky recently provided a student from Keyano College a valuable paid work term in the Lloydminster area in the power engineering field. It is hopeful that this will lead to employment at Husky upon graduation. The program will be launched company-wide, looking at all areas of growth including accounting, land administration, engineering, procurement and human resources.

Aboriginal economic development is assisted through ongoing career fairs and procurement procedure workshops. Nurturing competitiveness and entrepreneurial spirit within Aboriginal-based businesses has resulted in increased service-provision agreements and a doubling of the vendor budget over five years. Husky purchased more than $20 million in services from 39 Aboriginal businesses last year.

Educational and training support flows through Husky's Aboriginal educational bursary and scholarship programs. Based on the certainty that academic achievement leads to improved career opportunities and advancement, Husky has provided more than $1 million in bursaries to Aboriginal students pursuing secondary and post-secondary studies. The bursary and scholarship program is a critical link to the mentorship program, and combined with the assignment of a Husky employee as a mentor, provides assurance and certainty to the student about career choice and employment objectives.

Husky's community wellness investments continue to grow. Husky has regularly supported important cultural activities, such as a cultural awareness camp held at Bigstone Cree Nation last year. The camp is an opportunity for Husky employees working in areas such as operations and construction to understand important cultural differences taught by elders and other significant community members. Husky has supported the Aseniwuche Winewak Nation in Grande Cache for a number of years for similar reasons.

Husky's emphasis on diversity and positive, proactive Aboriginal relations is being noticed and has twice been recognized as one of Canada's top 10 companies for women and visible minorities on its executive/Board of Directors, and is a frequent honouree for leadership and excellence awards in workplace diversity and Aboriginal Relations.

This recognition is proof positive of Husky's continuous efforts; the real reward is growing its "three-pillar" approach to responsible, sustainable development with its Aboriginal community partners.

Onion Lake powwow

Husky Energy

THE ALBERTA BUSINESS AWARDS OF DISTINCTION
Eagle Feather Award finalist

KAINAIWA RESOURCES INC.

In the oil and gas industry to benefit its people

Kainaiwa Resources Inc. (KRI) is the oil and gas entity of the Blood Tribe in southern Alberta. The company was formed in 1997 with two main arms: one acts as a regulatory body for oil and gas activity within the reserve; the other has a business development function. The intent is to be an active participant in industrial development within the oil and gas sector for the ultimate benefit of its members.

Joint venture drilling rig

The corporation's mandate – "to increase revenue generated through oil and gas activities and to establish greater control over the Tribe's natural resources" - also has some key considerations - "to maximize the employment and contractual opportunities for Blood Tribe members, while maintaining the highest environmental standards and safeguards and to ensure that the Blood Tribe's cultural and spiritual customs are not infringed upon." This is the intent of KRI, and they have been successful to date in ensuring all aspects of their mandate are met.

On the regulatory side, the company is active in working with oil and gas companies proposing to operate on Blood Tribe land by negotiating agreements that would have the greatest positive impact to the Tribe and its members. The scope and terms of environmental assessments (archaeological, wildlife and vegetation) and audits, facility site and structure determination, and royalty terms and verification are key focuses.

Elder blessing development site

Employment and training development opportunities for members are another critical component that KRI pursues. Band members have received training leading to on reserve employment opportunities and in locations as far away as Texas. The corporation expects to assist in securing over 400 employment opportunities for members on an annual basis as the oil and gas industry in the province revitalizes.

Regarding the business development side of things, KRI has established its own energy company, Kainai Energy. The Tribe has partnered with Native American Resources Partners, a private investment firm specializing in cooperative First Nations resource development ventures. It has secured $100 million in start-up capital and can provide some of the capacity that will be required. Kainai Energy will undoubtedly assist the Tribe in its move towards greater self-reliance in the future.

The company also shares 50 per cent ownership with Savanna Energy Services Corporation in a drilling rig (currently operating out of province) and has a number of joint ventures on the service side of the oil and gas industry.

Revenue generated from KRI's joint ventures is committed to helping the community as a whole. Toy drives, food and essentials assistance for those in need, employment and training workshops, and high school incentive contributions are just a few of the ways KRI assists Tribe members.

"We've structured the corporation so that ultimately our people are the beneficiaries,' said KRI General Manager David Shade. "Our decision-making processes ensure we get development right, and the partnerships we've built bode well for members and future generations. That's our mission statement and mandate in a nutshell."

KAINAIWA RESOURCES INC.

Kainai Energy

THE ALBERTA BUSINESS AWARDS OF DISTINCTION
Best Practice Award finalist

THOMPSON BROTHERS CONSTRUCTION

Moving the earth and more

Scrapers working on Highway 63

With over 1,000 pieces of equipment ranging from 150-ton capacity mining trucks through graders, bulldozers and haulers to compacters and heaters, Thompson Brothers Construction is one of the industry leaders in preparatory work for oil sands projects.

The company works with major oil and gas companies on a wide range of projects: site preparation, well pad construction, road building, drainage systems, ditching and more. Its expertise, experience, equipment fleet and, most importantly, personnel ensure projects are completed as planned through

rigorous quality assurance and quality control measures.

Headquartered in Spruce Grove, the company maintains a 12-acre site there and an eight-acre regional facility in Fort McMurray where the bulk of their work is ongoing. They are active across the province and western Canada, putting a special emphasis on local and Aboriginal hires for all their project work.

Equipment near Fort McMurray

"We always integrate ourselves with local communities where we work," said President and CEO Larry Thompson. "So it's important to hire locally to improve regional economic prosperity. With the bulk of our current work in the Fort McMurray area, Aboriginal hires make up a good component of our Alberta-based workforce - nearly 14 per cent. This doesn't account for projects in other provinces but it's a number we're determined to increase over time."

Thompson Brothers Construction has maintained working relationships with numerous Aboriginal companies over the years, primarily with Lakeshore Contracting but also with Bear Slashing, the Tuccaro Group of Companies, CentreFire Contracting and IPS Medical. Its ongoing nine-year partnership with Lakeshore alone has resulted in the hiring of over 250 Aboriginal workers during that time.

The company has either contracted or are in discussions with the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, the Driftpile Cree First Nation and the Alexis Nakota Sioux First Nation. They have established excellent linkages with the Athabasca Tribal Council's First Nations Employment office and other local employment facilities as part of their local/Aboriginal hire initiative. The Aboriginal Human Resources Development Council has asked the company to provide input on training and employment programs across Canada based in part on their successes to date.

Its commitment to the environment, workplace safety and ongoing employee training has won the company a host of awards, not only from its partners but also from industry associations and governing bodies like the Alberta Roadbuilders and Heavy Construction Association and Worksafe Alberta.

Suncor Energy has recognized the company with its President's Award of Operational Excellence twice for over one million hours of safe work and its Leadership Safety Award four times in the past decade. Nexen Inc. awarded Thompson Brothers Construction its Safety Award in 2006 for the quality of its extraction and granular placement work on various well pads, access roads and flow lines at its Long Lake project.

The company is celebrating its 48th year of operation and is proudly 100 per cent Alberta-owned. Recently honoured by the City of Spruce Grove with a "Spirit of the City" Award for its outstanding and ongoing support of youth sports, the company embodies the "hometown player hits the big leagues" persona well.

"While our operations are wide-ranging across the country, the majority of our work and most of the attendant economic benefits stay right here in Alberta," said President Thompson. "That's one of the factors that allows us to support community activities and causes where we work. It's something we'll always do."

THE ALBERTA BUSINESS AWARDS OF DISTINCTION

Best Practice Award finalist

PTI GROUP It's HOW 'they' do it

Cooking school students at Marinas Lake Lodge

2011 was a good year for the PTI Group. In March they were recognized with the Premier's Award of Distinction – the ultimate honour for all the finalists in the various categories for the Alberta Business Awards of Distinction. The prestigious recognition acknowledges the company's ongoing efforts over almost 35 years in the province.

In June, new contracts were signed with two major oil sands companies that will see an aggregate of over 5,000 workers being accommodated at existing and new PTI facilities throughout northern Alberta.

Still, the company is not content to rest on its laurels, continually forging new economic relationships with Aboriginal communities and bands that are a win-win for both parties.

PTI Group is one of North America's largest fully integrated suppliers of remote site services. They provide both temporary and permanent workforce accommodations, food services, facility management, environmental services, and other value-added services to resource industries worldwide, with much of their activity based in Alberta.

Wapasu Creek facilities

"We recognize the importance of being good neighbours and corporate citizens by supporting local businesses and economic goals," said CEO Ron Green. "Building mutually beneficial partnerships have been the cornerstone of our success, and we aim to continue forging partnerships that respect Aboriginal rights, environmental and cultural concerns while providing sustainable economic benefits."

PTI has been a leader in proactive Aboriginal relations and continues to create new strategic partnerships, forging linkages that benefit communities and individuals alike. They have increased Aboriginal employment by nearly 40 per cent in the past two years and continue to develop harmonious partnerships with Aboriginal businesses and governments throughout the province.

Partnerships with over a dozen Aboriginal nations/governments continues to increase employment levels throughout the company, while ongoing recruitment programs and initiatives such as *Inclusion Works 2011*, aimed at increased numbers of Aboriginal workers in the technical and managerial fields, are a continuing priority.

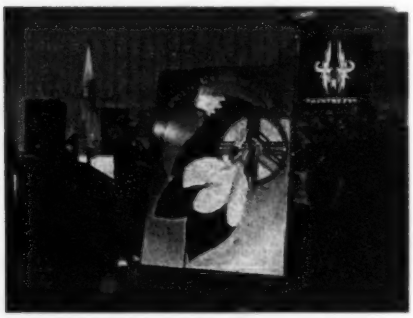
(Continued on page 7)

THE ALBERTA BUSINESS AWARDS OF DISTINCTION
Best Practice Award finalist

ROYAL BANK OF CANADA

Leading the way through its 'chosen journey'

Royal Bank of Canada (RBC) continues to lead Canada's major banks when it comes to relationships with Canada's Aboriginal peoples. An integral part of the bank's diversity initiative, the strides they have made provincially and nationally has made them a finalist in the Aboriginal Relations - Best Practice Award of Distinction category for a second consecutive year.



Opening of the Frog Lake arena complex

"It's an honour to be considered for this award again," said Brian Hjlesvold, Manager, Aboriginal Relations for Alberta and the Territories. "We're pleased to be a part of many national and provincial Aboriginal initiatives."

There certainly have been many positive outcomes stemming from RBC's leadership in Aboriginal relations and their desire to work proactively with and for Aboriginal people and communities.

The company continues to move forward along a path of learning and understanding guided by ongoing consultation with individuals and communities. Its goal of improved economic sustainability and prosperity through collaborative partnerships lies at the heart of the bank's ongoing efforts.

By focusing on key areas like infrastructure, health, employment, business development education, culture, social services and the environment, RBC is actively involved as a lender, a donor and always as a supporter.

In the past year, $8.2 million in loans has enabled important infrastructure initiatives such as building and road construction by bands and Aboriginal corporations in the province. Over $25 million has enabled business development and re-financing.

The company has provided sponsorship funding for many Alberta organizations that promote Aboriginal business, financial initiatives and well-being. RBC recently financed the construction of a new multi-purpose community centre at Frog Lake.

Aboriginal employment recruitment and retention are areas where RBC continues to dedicate substantial resources with impressive results. Recruitment activities include social media, job fairs and support for post-secondary schools like Lethbridge Community College, which offers a program tailored to meet the needs of Aboriginal students entering the college.

The company has undertaken numerous employment initiatives and educational improvement programs such as the Martin Aboriginal Education Initiative, which helps youth stay in school. In Alberta, the Saddle Lake Boys & Girls Club was awarded a three-year grant to support youth programming to an average of 65 kids, ranging in ages from five to 18 years of age.

Its Aboriginal Students Award Program grants 10 scholarships a year to students in university or college. Since 1992, the program has granted over $1.2 million in sponsorships and donations to 98 students with Alberta receiving two awards in 2011.

Aboriginal employee well-being is a key focus too. The Royal Eagles is a nationwide Employee Resource Group that promotes Aboriginal cultural awareness and acts as a resource and liaison with communities and individuals.

In Alberta, the chapter and RBC Foundation help with funding and facilitating the hot lunch program at Amiskwaciy Academy high school in Edmonton. Recently RBC launched "One Heart," a social networking site aimed at facilitating Aboriginal collaboration and networking.

Always a leader in firsts among financial institutions regarding Aboriginal relations such as services in Cree and Inuktitut, RBC plans to continue to champion and improve interactions with Aboriginal communities and organizations in Alberta and across the country. The company knows its "chosen journey" is the right one to pursue and embrace.

Late elder Marge Freidel with student at Amiskwiciy fundraiser

RBC

THE ALBERTA BUSINESS AWARDS OF DISTINCTION
Eagle Feather Award finalist

THE SAWRIDGE GROUP OF COMPANIES Continually Improving to Strengthen Communities

Last year the Sawridge Group of Companies was a finalist for the coveted Eagle feather Award of Distinction, presented to an exemplary Aboriginal-based business. Again this year it is in elite company as one of the four finalists. It's not hard to see why, as the organization continues to expand and improve its operations while remaining true to its founding principles and mandate.

With a stable of hotel properties and a recognizable brand in the hospitality business, Sawridge is expanding its core. It's moving into the retail, real estate and aviation industries while continuing to upgrade and improve its hotel properties in every aspect. From new information systems, enhanced staff training and infrastructure improvements to foreign worker programs, eco-friendly initiatives and accelerated employee management programs, the company continues to build on its unique brand while giving back to the people and communities that are its *raison d'être*.

Hoodoo sculpture in South Edmonton property

Dining area at Jasper property

This was demonstrated dramatically in the company's response to the devastating wildfires in the Slave Lake area this past May. Sawridge reacted proactively, immediately. It housed employees and families in its facilities, coordinated child care, counselling, information meetings, flights, fed and housed emergency workers, and much more. Its properties were hubs of activity during and after the disaster.

As Chief Executive Officer John MacNutt notes: "...this crisis and our response to it indicates the type of exemplary people we employ. They went above and beyond, and made every one of us hugely proud."

The dozens of letters of thanks and commendation attest to the company's collective effort at easing the tragedy of the wildfires.

Unexpected crises aside, Sawridge has focused on the communities they serve and the 600 people they employ ever since its inception. The list of charities and organizations they interact with and support across the province is extensive and wide-ranging. Over 70 groups are beneficiaries of its in-depth commitment to community causes and activities that strengthen and improve them.

The organization captured the Sweet Dreams Trophy from the Make-A-Wish Foundation for their fundraising efforts, is deeply involved in educational initiatives that benefit and advance Aboriginal students, and participates in spring cleanups in all the communities they are active in. These are just a few highlights from an incredibly diverse program of community involvement.

Recognition of their commitment to excellence and constant improvement has won them a raft of awards from the hospitality industry both provincially and nationally. Once again, Sawridge is a finalist as one of Canada's 50 Best Managed Companies, to be announced later this year. In March the company will be honoured with the Hotel Association of Canada's Humanitarian Award, in part for their exemplary efforts during the May wildfires.

Accolades like these are frequent, and the recognition is appreciated. While honoured, Sawridge remains dedicated to the heart of its corporate strategy and succession planning approach – investing wisely in people and infrastructure. This strengthens communities through long-term diversification and the attendant benefits it provides.

SAWRIDGE GROUP OF COMPANIES

(Continued from page 4)

The company has demonstrated its commitment to positive working relationships with its Aboriginal partners through ongoing and innovative initiatives. Its partnership with Métis locals, the Northern Alberta Institute of Technology and Alberta Employment and Immigration has resulted in the very successful Aboriginal Camp Cook Program; three classes have graduated with two more sessions slated for 2012. PTI also works closely with Aboriginal Link and has a key role within the leadership circle of the Aboriginal Human Resources Council of Canada.

Always involved in cultural and social functions that benefit partner communities, PTI also actively promotes new and expanding Aboriginal business ventures unconnected to their operations through networking with other third-party industries and various government departments. The company knows the value and importance of optimal partner relations and strives to continually achieve them.

As one partner puts it: "Our relationship is based on shared vision, integrity and trust. PTI is committed to developing an Aboriginal workforce and it is something that is not simply stated, it is lived."

It is the way PTI has always operated, and will continue to do so.

PTI GROUP INC

(Continued from page 1)

one of four Alberta-based business "wise practices" models to be featured at the Banff Centre of Management's National Business Symposium this past fall.

Recognizing that there is a cost associated to offer this level of support, the corporation recently purchased *The Wingate by Wyndham* and the *Homefire Grill* restaurant located in west Edmonton. This creative diversified venture solution has paid off because the hotel and adjacent restaurant are both successful. This further enables them to continue with their corporate commitments by maintaining the ability to provide their outlined services to its clients.

Several years ago, AIIC and its Aboriginal Capital Corporation (ACC) partners hosted the first Alberta Aboriginal Business Symposium. The event recognized the thousands of businesses AIIC and other ACC's have helped through loans of over $50 million and $165 million dollars respectively. Of the AIIC amount, over 96 per cent has been repaid. It's a testament to the hard work and belief of AIIC's clientele, as it is a direct reflection of the importance of the corporation's role.

Ribbon cutting ceremony at hotel grand opening

The symposium was also a celebration of 20 years of effort, and the opportunity to recognize specific individuals who have been instrumental in supporting Aboriginal businesses over the decades. AIIC attributes their leadership, vision and commitment to good governance practices as instrumental factors that lead to their many years of success.

Twenty some years on, AIIC remains committed to the Alberta First Nations entrepreneurial spirit. It continues to provide business management tools, support and necessary funding. The corporation helps to lay the cornerstones for the clients to ensure future success and prosperity, which adds to the economic fibre of our province.

Their passion, determination and commitment through the investments in the Aboriginal business ventures in Alberta have truly empowered the many businessmen and women who have and who continue to excel.

AIIC

cando
Inspiring Success

CANDO has been providing excellence in Aboriginal economic development for over 20 years. CANDO is an organization with a national reputation that provides training and skills unique to building economic capacity in Aboriginal communities.

We are committed to not only being the leader in programs and services for economic development officers, but enhancing training opportunities for future Economic Development Officers (EDOs). Our vision continues to be to strengthen Aboriginal economies and that begins at all levels of training. Our vision is "To build capacity which strengthens Aboriginal economies by providing programs and services to Economic Development Officers."

Once again, this year CANDO has coordinated the nominations and finalists selection process for the two Alberta Business Awards of Distinction sponsored by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada: the Aboriginal Relations - Best Practice Award of Distinction and the Eagle Feather Business Award of Distinction.

CANDO would also like to personally congratulate all the nominees and the finalists. Your entrepreneurship and achievements make us very proud.

Please address all letters, comments and requests to:

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Tel: 1-800-567-9604

Printing – Capital Colour Press

Design – MGS Graphics

Translation – Translatech

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Published under the authority of the
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs
and Northern Development
Ottawa, 2012

www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca
1-800-567-9604
TTY only 1-866-553-0554

QS-A023-110-EE-A1
ISSN 1923-0508

© Minister of Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development, 2012

Cette publication est aussi disponible en français sous le titre :
Entreprise autochtone : célébrée en Alberta

(Continued from page 1)

one of four Alberta-based business "wise practices" models to be featured at the Banff Centre of Management's National Business Symposium this past fall.

Recognizing that there is a cost associated to offer this level of support, the corporation recently purchased *The Wingate by Wyndham* and the *Homefire Grill* restaurant located in west Edmonton. This creative diversified venture solution has paid off because the hotel and adjacent restaurant are both successful. This further enables them to continue with their corporate commitments by maintaining the ability to provide their outlined services to its clients.

Several years ago, AIIC and its Aboriginal Capital Corporation (ACC) partners hosted the first Alberta Aboriginal Business Symposium. The event recognized the thousands of businesses AIIC and other ACC's have helped through loans of over $50 million and $165 million dollars respectively. Of the AIIC amount, over 96 per cent has been repaid. It's a testament to the hard work and belief of AIIC's clientele, as it is a direct reflection of the importance of the corporation's role.

Ribbon cutting ceremony at hotel grand opening

The symposium was also a celebration of 20 years of effort, and the opportunity to recognize specific individuals who have been instrumental in supporting Aboriginal businesses over the decades. AIIC attributes their leadership, vision and commitment to good governance practices as instrumental factors that lead to their many years of success.

Twenty some years on, AIIC remains committed to the Alberta First Nations entrepreneurial spirit. It continues to provide business management tools, support and necessary funding. The corporation helps to lay the cornerstones for the clients to ensure future success and prosperity, which adds to the economic fibre of our province.

Their passion, determination and commitment through the investments in the Aboriginal business ventures in Alberta have truly empowered the many businessmen and women who have and who continue to excel.

AIIC

cando
Inspiring Success

CANDO has been providing excellence in Aboriginal economic development for over 20 years. CANDO is an organization with a national reputation that provides training and skills unique to building economic capacity in Aboriginal communities.

We are committed to not only being the leader in programs and services for economic development officers, but enhancing training opportunities for future Economic Development Officers (EDOs). Our vision continues to be to strengthen Aboriginal economies and that begins at all levels of training. Our vision is "To build capacity which strengthens Aboriginal economies by providing programs and services to Economic Development Officers."

Once again, this year CANDO has coordinated the nominations and finalists selection process for the two Alberta Business Awards of Distinction sponsored by Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada: the Aboriginal Relations - Best Practice Award of Distinction and the Eagle Feather Business Award of Distinction.

CANDO would also like to personally congratulate all the nominees and the finalists. Your entrepreneurship and achievements make us very proud.

Please address all letters, comments and requests to:

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Tel: 1-800-567-9604

Printing – Capital Colour Press

Design – MGS Graphics

Translation – Translatech

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Published under the authority of the
Minister of Aboriginal Affairs
and Northern Development
Ottawa, 2012

www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca
1-800-567-9604
TTY only 1-866-553-0554

QS-A023-110-EE-A1
ISSN 1923-0508

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Cette publication est aussi disponible en français sous le titre :
Entreprise autochtone : célébrée en Alberta